

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Upon further reconsideration by the examiner regarding Claim 9 (the sole remaining rejected independent Claim), while Fukushima discloses a damper assembly with a torque limiter with a friction torque limiter between an axis and an airtight damper, wherein the torque limiter is provided inside the damper, Fukushima does not disclose that the torque limiter includes a plurality of friction plates provided with a wet-type friction material which limits the torque that can be transmitted through the damper as claimed.

The examiner now concurs with applicant that the plates 3 of Fukushima have no torque limiting function. The torque limiting function is provided by engagement of balls 52 with depressions 53. Thus, since Fukushima's plates 3 do not limit torque, they cannot be equated with the friction plates of the torque limiter recited in Claim 9 (as pointed out in applicant's remarks filed October 6, 2009) and would not be an obvious modification thereof.

It is for these reasons that Claims 9-13 have now been allowed.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

2. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Pam Rodriguez whose telephone number is 571-272-7122. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays 5:30 AM - 4 PM and Tuesdays 8 AM - 2 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rob Siconolfi can be reached on 571-272-7124. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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